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The Shariah Scare Industry and the Clash of Temporalities

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Abstract

Islamophobic alarms over shariah have resounded in the United States during the second decade of the twenty-first century. These alarms perpetuate the notion of a clash of civilizations, pitting Islam versus the West. Instead of discussing the clash of civilizations thesis, however, this article proposes that a clash of temporalities has been constructed by a "shariah scare industry." Focusing on the Center for Security Policy and Nonie Darwish, this article discloses the shariah scare argument that Muslims and non-Muslims experience time in two contrasting manners, what I call frozen past time and ominous future time.

Keywords

Islam in the United States, Islamophobia, Shariah

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Abstract: Multiple alarms over Islamic law, or shariah, have resounded in the United States during the second decade of the twenty-first century. These alarms perpetuate the notion of a clash of civilizations, pitting Islam versus the West. Instead of discussing the clash of civilizations thesis, however, this article proposes that a clash of temporalities has been constructed by a “shariah scare industry.” Focusing on the Center for Security Policy and Nonie Darwish, this article discloses the shariah scare argument that Muslims and non-Muslims experience time in two contrasting manners, what I call frozen past time and ominous future time.

Keywords: Islam in the United States, Islamophobia, Shariah, Center for Security Policy, Nonie Darwish

Subtlety was not the plan. Assembled in front of the Trump International Hotel and Tower in Chicago, March Against Shariah participants made their convictions clear with signs stating “Ban Shariah.” Similar signs appeared elsewhere on June 17, 2017, a date scheduled to see March for Shariah demonstrations in over twenty American cities. Protestors and counter-protestors fought audibly and in some cases physically as the result of the organizing efforts of ACT (American Congress for Truth) for America. Since its 2007 founding by Lebanese immigrant Brigitte Gabriel, ACT has portrayed shariah as a dire threat to America. According to its website, ACT seeks “to inform and educate the public about what Shariah is, how it is creeping into American society and compromising our constitutional freedom of speech, press, religion and equality [and?] what we can do to stop it.” As of 2017, ACT boasts 750,000 members, and throughout its first decade of existence, it has repeatedly dived into the American political fray. Gabriel claimed that al Qaeda, Hezbollah, and other Islamist organizations supported Barack Obama because he is a clandestine Muslim, and after campaigning vociferously for Donald Trump, Gabriel celebrated ACT’s “direct line” to the newly elected president.

This line is one of many that has linked American politicians to ACT, as well as to likeminded organizations and individuals who assert that shariah fundamentally clashes with American laws and values and threatens to bring catastrophe to America. Such concern about shariah was voiced, for example, in 2010, when presidential hopeful Newt Gingrich warned of a “comprehensive political, economic, and religious movement that seeks to impose shariah—Islamic law—upon all aspects of global society” (Posner). Citing supposedly substantiating evidence in his film *America at Risk: The War with No Name*, Gingrich went on to call for a federal ban on shariah. Numerous state legislators have shared Gingrich’s consternation. Also in 2010, Oklahoma representative Rex Duncan proposed the Save Our State amendment, which boldly prohibited Oklahoma courts from drawing upon “the legal precepts of other nations or cultures” and identified “Shariah law” as a particular object of concern. Duncan framed the amendment as a necessary weapon in a cultural “war for the survival of America” (Nelson), and a majority of Oklahoma voters agreed. Although eventually struck down by a federal district judge for violating Muslims’ First Amendment rights, the Save Our State measure’s popular support put fear of shariah on parade for all to

see. Soon, other states marched in step with Oklahoma. “Shariah bans” were proposed in over thirty states in 2011, and by 2014, seven states passed some sort of ballot measure that prohibits the state’s courts from considering “foreign, international, or religious law.” Some of these states put particularly curious twists on their measures, such as a Tennessee proposal to make following shariah a felony carrying the punishment of fifteen years in jail. This type of proposal reveals a striking degree of ignorance about Islam, failing to acknowledge the fact that shariah addresses rules for prayer, dietary regulations, guidelines for interpersonal relations, and many other matters that in almost every context would never enter the conversation of felonious offenses. Additionally, anti-shariah measures exhibit further ignorance by depicting shariah as monolithic, as if it invariably replicates a strict Wahhabi version of Islamic law, instead of acknowledging diversity of interpretation.

According to those who sound an anti-shariah alarm, this one-size-fits-all shariah contains a requirement for Muslims to deceive fellow Americans regarding their true intention to implement a one-two knockout blow against America. Subversion of American legal and cultural foundations is allegedly to be followed by violent actions against non-Muslim Americans. Fear of this two-pronged attack has resulted not only in anti-shariah marches and legislation but also in adamant opposition to plans to build or expand mosques, in raucous campaign rally applause for a presidential candidate who vows to ban Muslims from entering the nation and in various other settings during the twenty-first century’s second decade. Comparing this decade to the first decade of the century, Moustafa Bayoumi argues, “Something has changed in America. ... Acts of cultural and religious expression, and even just the ordinary activities of Muslim Americans, have now become suspicious on another level beyond imminent violence. Just being Muslim is now seen as a threat to the very culture of America” (160). Though this ratcheted up Islamophobia defies simplistic explanation, Bayoumi insightfully turns to demographics for one likely factor. He theorizes that “phantom fears surrounding Muslim Americans may be driven by an anxiety held by an older, white, and Christian America that is nervously confronting the end of its majority in American politics” as well as “the end of their historical privileges” (161). Bayoumi also considers the influence exerted by the “Islamophobia network,” which the Center for American Progress describes as “a small, tightly networked group of misinformation experts guiding an effort that reaches millions of Americans through effective advocates, media partners, and grassroots organizing” (Ali et al.: 1). Funded by over forty million dollars doled out by seven foundations, these “misinformation experts” cast aspersions upon Islam and Muslims in order to drum up support for American politicians who call for intervention in Muslim-majority nations and who take a strong pro-Israel position.

This article spotlights a rhetorical construction commonly employed by members of this Islamophobia network and by others who constitute a “shariah scare industry.”¹ I call this construction a clash of temporalities, which depicts Muslims and non-Muslims as experiencing time in two conflicting manners. As portrayed by what I label *frozen past time*, Muslims’ thoughts and actions in the present are completely determined by shariah’s seventh-century Arabian origins. On one level, frozen past time resembles Mircea Eliade’s

¹ I would like to credit Nathan Lean’s phrase “Islamophobia industry” for influencing my coining of the phrase “shariah scare industry.”

conception of sacred time, featuring a continual return to a time of mythical origins.² Unlike sacred time's generation of renewal amidst religious festivals, however, frozen past time's seventh-century Arabian origins allegedly dictate determinative closure at every moment of Muslims' lives. The shariah scare industry's portrayal of frozen past time dehumanizes Muslims by stripping them of free will and representing them as scary "shariah slaves." Whereas the shariah scare industry freezes Muslims in the past, it casts non-Muslim Americans within what I call *ominous future time*. This temporal framework features the warning that America awaits its doom if non-Muslims fail to respond to the impending threat promised by shariah. Similar to Martin Heidegger's phenomenological disclosure of the in-breaking future, ominous future time's flow accentuates the future breaking into the present instead of time progressing from past to present to future. Yet unlike Heidegger's "authentic" understanding of temporality,³ in ominous future time, the in-breaking future exists as an impending threat that must be thwarted at all costs.

Islamophobia: Theoretical and Definitional Considerations

The shariah scare industry's clash of temporalities functions as yet another manifestation of Islamophobia in the United States in the twenty-first century. Before zooming in on this particular manifestation, however, I turn my attention to theoretical and definitional discussions pertaining to the term Islamophobia, a word that entered currency in 1997 through the British nongovernmental organization Runnymede Trust. In its report *Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All*, the Runnymede Trust defined Islamophobia as "closed" views of Islam that are monolithic as well as separate from and inferior to Western cultures. These closed views present Islam as an enemy and a manipulative political ideology. Moreover, these views prohibit criticism of the West, whereas discrimination of Muslims is justified and considered natural (Runnymede Trust).

Multiple endeavors to add conceptual clarity and nuance to the term Islamophobia have followed the publication of the Runnymede Trust report. Some scholars have sought a more succinct definition. Erik Bleich, for example, offers a focal definition of Islamophobia for social scientists who aspire to use the term in comparative causal analysis. Aiming to equip social scientists to compare Islamophobia over time within a geographic unit, across space in relative strength and manifestations, in different social groups in regard to dimension and prevalence, and in intensity relative to negative attitudes and emotions towards other groups, Bleich defines Islamophobia as "indiscriminate negative attitudes or emotions directed at Islam or Muslims" (1581).

Others have added to the discussion by noting important distinctions that should be made when using the term. Chris Allen differentiates Islamophobia-as-process from Islamophobia-as-product. Allen argues that discriminatory events, or products, experienced by Muslims may not necessarily be the result of the three following elements of the process

² Eliade argued in *The Sacred and the Profane* that participation in religious festivals, especially for archaic cultures, involved temporarily exiting ordinary time and entering into sacred time, the time of origins. During New Year festivals, according to Eliade, the cosmos regained its original sacredness and time began afresh.

³ For a helpful discussion of Heidegger's understanding of authenticity in *Being and Time*, see Varga and Guignon.

of Islamophobia: stereotypification, or constructing an “evaluative hierarchy” featuring in-group or out-group differences; representation, or depicting meaning through visual signs such as connecting hijab with fundamentalism; and semiology, or correlating representation with visual identifiers (140–44). Another distinction comes from Göran Larsson and Åke Sander, who propose a need to take into account three separate factors when employing the term Islamophobia. According to Larsson and Sander, robust use of the term requires consideration of the mental properties of the actor, the result of the actions of the [...] themselves, as well as the mental properties of the victims (13). Furthermore, one more illustrative call for differentiation is expressed by Roland Imhoff and Julia Recker. Responding to the criticism that the term Islamophobia is little more than a rhetorical roadblock intended to obfuscate well-justified critique of deleterious Islamic practices and dogmas, Imhoff and Recker distinguish between Secular Critique of Islam and Islamoprejudice. They claim that the former is not marred by anti-Islamic prejudices but instead critiques Islamic interference, similar to any religious interference, within cultural and political spheres. Islamoprejudice, on the other hand, is “a form of religion-based prejudice that is linked to the perception of Muslims as threatening” (813).

While Imhoff and Recker’s decoupling of Islamoprejudice from Secular Critique of Islam takes theoretical discussions of Islamophobia a helpful step forward, once again further differentiation is in order when analyzing their definition of Islamoprejudice; it is this particular distinction that I would especially like to highlight in various usages of the term Islamophobia. On one side stands an emphasis upon prejudice, in which Islamophobia is essentially synonymous with anti-Muslim stereotypes, discrimination, or racism. On the other side resides an emphasis upon fear, in which the term Islamophobia fundamentally captures an affective response to Islamic principles and those who follow these principles.

Representing the former side, Michael Dobkowski conceptualizes Islamophobia as social prejudice, which seeks the exclusion of Muslims largely through stereotyping, functioning similarly to other forms of prejudice such as racism, sexism, and ageism (324). Nazita Lajevardi and Kassra Oskooii liken Islamophobia to a specific prejudice in American history. They posit that contemporary objections towards Muslim Americans are essentially a recurrence of, and perhaps even rooted in, deep-seated racist prejudice that underlies resentment towards African Americans. Among those who emphasize the element of prejudice, some see benefit in jettisoning the term Islamophobia, arguing that what is at play is not ultimately about Islam as a religion but about Muslims as another group of people subject to prejudice and discrimination. Fred Halliday favors “anti-Muslimism” over the term Islamophobia (898), and Allen at least considers “anti-Muslim racism” or “anti-Islamic racism” as possible alternatives (139).

Standing on the latter side, Peter Gottschalk and Gabriel Greenberg portray Islamophobia as an irrational fear of Islam and Muslims. Although falling within a general category of social phobia, Gottschalk and Greenberg identify Islamophobic symbols that instigate and sustain a social anxiety exhibited specifically towards Islam and Muslim cultures (45–60). Sherman Lee et al. agree that Islamophobia should be understood fundamentally as an affective, fear-based response to Islam and Muslims (94). Jonas Kunst et al. concur, demonstrated by their Perceived Islamophobia Scale, developed and

implemented to measure fear of Islam and Muslims in Germany, France, and the United Kingdom.

I highlight these differing emphases upon prejudice and upon fear because the shariah scare industry's clash of temporalities promotes Islamophobia by tapping deeply into both. Exclusionary prejudice through stereotyping pervades the shariah scare industry's calls to stop the so-called Islamization of America, calls that demand not only the removal of a caricatured shariah but also the placement of severe restrictions on Muslims' everyday activities. Akin to other forms of racism and prejudice, the clash of temporalities demonizes in order to exclude. Additionally, it traffics greatly in the affective response of deep-rooted fear. The clash of temporalities places front and center the purported likelihood that non-Muslim American lives are in peril if Islam continues to grow in America. Aspiring for maximal influence upon its non-Muslim American audience, the shariah scare industry utilizes the clash of temporalities to do double Islamophobic duty in both drawing upon prejudice and eliciting fear.

CFSP and Darwish: Background Information

I illustrate this clash below by focusing on writings from one organization and one individual within the shariah scare industry. My selected organization is the Center for Security Policy (CFSP), founded in 1988 by Frank Gaffney. A Reagan administration appointee,⁴ Gaffney has shown his Christian Zionist stripes by speaking at Christians United for Israel conferences and by serving on the advisory board of the pro-Israel Clarion Fund, whose film *The Third Jihad* evokes the specter of shariah infiltration in America. Along with Gaffney, other CFSP leaders have delivered scores of anti-Muslim messages to the American public and politicians; one particularly striking instance involved CFSP "Team Leader" William Boykin. The Pentagon determined that the Army lieutenant general violated Department of Defense regulations by stating during a speech given in uniform that God placed then-president George W. Bush in office, that Muslims hate America, and that the military is recruiting a "spiritual army" to fight Islam (Posner). Gaffney, Boykin, and fellow CFSP leaders jointly authored a 352-page report titled *Shariah: The Threat to America: An Exercise in Competitive Analysis*, which this article will consider in detail. This 2010 report's preface proclaims,

This study is the result of months of analysis, discussion and drafting by a group of top security policy experts concerned with the preeminent totalitarian threat of our time: the legal-political-military doctrine known within Islam as *shariah*. It is designed to provide a comprehensive and articulate 'second opinion' on the official characterizations and assessments of this threat as put forth by the United States government. ... [T]his study challenges the assumptions underpinning the official line in the conflict with today's totalitarian threat, which is currently euphemistically described as "violent extremism," and the policies of co-existence, accommodation and submission that are rooted in those assumptions. (CFSP)

⁴ Gaffney served as Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs for seven months in 1987.

The CFSP report refers to “the mainstream doctrine of shariah” (227), which it identifies as thoroughly at odds with the Constitution. It states, for example, “In fact, based on shariah’s tenets, its core attributes – especially its intolerance of other faiths and disfavored populations and its bid for supremacy over all other legal or political systems, there can be no confusion on this score: As the Framers fully understood, shariah is an enemy of the United States Constitution. The two are incompatible” (228). The report claims that much of its evidence comes from the so-called *Explanatory Memorandum*, which according to the CFSP emerged during a 2004 FBI raid and confirms that the Muslim Brotherhood controls “nearly every major Muslim organization in the United States” (108). These organizations supposedly hide behind a false benign appearance while conducting “outreach to the government, law enforcement, media, religious community, and others for one reason: to *subvert* them in furtherance of their objective, which is implementation of Islamic law” (39). The CFSP report points its condemnatory finger not only at Muslims. It also accuses American leaders of willful complicity in facilitating the infiltration of shariah, alleging that through “internal policy as well as public statements, U.S. officials have devised and seek to impose purposefully obscure and counterfactual language, evidently selected to divert American attention away from the Arab/Muslim origins of shariah and the Islamic doctrine of jihad” (19). While undoubtedly dismissed by many members of Congress, the CFSP report found its share of congressional champions, including Republicans Trent Franks of Arizona, Michele Bachmann of Minnesota, Pete Hoekstra of Michigan, and Colorado’s Doug Lamborn.⁵

With its picture of the Muslim Brotherhood secretly working in cahoots with American officials to undermine the United States, the CFSP advances what Sarah Posner has called a “shari’ah conspiracy theory.” Belief in conspiracies aiming for the downfall of the nation may be nearly as American as apple pie, and in some cases the purported discovery of a damning document, like the *Explanatory Memorandum*, has flavored these conspiracy theories. In 1893, for example, the Detroit newspaper *Patriotic American* published an ostensible directive to American Catholics from Pope Leo XIII. Reflecting a well-established anti-Catholic contention that obedience to the Pope nullified patriotism, the letter absolved Catholics from national loyalty oaths and urged them “to exterminate all heretics” on a specified date in September (Higham: 85). Protestant fears were subsequently exacerbated by Burton Ames Huntington, who wrote that in response to the Pope’s missive, seven hundred thousand Catholic soldiers stood at the ready in cities across America. A few decades later, another American religious minority found itself implicated in a bogus damning document conspiracy claim. The *Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion* appeared to be transcripts of speeches given to an assembly of Jewish “elders” who intended to conspire to rule the world. Each speech detailed the techniques, such as financial monopoly and revolution,⁶ that these Jews would employ to subvert governments and institutions. The *Protocols* was disseminated in Henry Ford’s *Dearborn Independent* and other publications

⁵ At a 2010 Gaffney-organized Capitol Visitors’ Center event, Lamborn proclaimed, “Our U.S. courts are increasingly facing cases where the defense invokes the adherence to Shari’ah law” (Posner).

⁶ Many believed that the elders’ secret activity contributed to the downfall of Russia and the spread of Bolshevism.

after reaching American shores, but its fabricated origins by the Russian secret police remained swept under the anti-Semitic rug.

In addition to the CFSP as my representative organization, I also explore the shariah scare industry's clash of temporalities by delving into writings of Nonie Darwish. My decision to focus on Darwish results from her self-ascription as an "ex-Muslim insider," which supposedly supplies her with deep experiential knowledge of shariah and its threat to America. Presenting herself as "a Muslim Shahid's Daughter,"⁷ Darwish has addressed audiences throughout the United States since the 2006 publication of *Now They Call Me Infidel: Why I Renounced Jihad for America, Israel, and the War on Terror*. Darwish has also authored *Cruel and Usual Punishment: The Terrifying Global Implications of Islamic Law*, *The Devil We Don't Know: The Dark Side of Revolutions*, and *Wholly Different: Why I Chose Biblical Values Over Islamic Values*. She has directed Former Muslims United, managed the website Arabs for Israel, and spoken on behalf of the Christian Zionist organization StandWithUs. Darwish regularly describes her reaction to the 9/11 attacks in terms similar to the following account found in *Cruel and Usual Punishment*: "When I saw the second plane fly into the Twin Towers, I knew that jihad had come to America, and my life would change forever. I would need to speak out to warn my fellow Americans of what was coming" (2009, xi). Darwish capitalizes on her Egyptian upbringing to provide apparently personal remembrances of Muslims, juxtaposing these dehumanizing portraits with what she claims to have observed among Americans. In *The Devil We Don't Know*, she professes,

After seventeen years in the Egyptian educational system and my religious education in Islam, it dawned on me that I was never taught values such as the brotherhood of man, respect for human rights, pursuing peace and harmony in our relationships with people outside our faith, and treating our neighbors, including neighboring countries, as we wished to be treated. Such values are never taught in Islamic culture, not even in a nonreligious social setting. It was all about jihad, martyrdom, conspiracy theories, and hatred of the other. The sad thing is that Muslims as a group have never found anything unusual or bad about this – even I never fully understood this until later in life, when I came to live in the United States. (2012, 56)

Darwish has plenty of company in utilizing an "ex-Muslim insider" status to gain epistemic leverage in bolstering anti-Islamic claims among American audiences. Atheist Ayaan Hirsi Ali functions prominently in this role, but like Darwish, the majority of ex-Muslim insiders espouse a Christian Zionist perspective. Self-described "former Palestinian Liberation Organization terrorist" Walid Shoebat proclaims that "violent Islam is true Islam" (137) in *God's War on Terror*, a book filled with first-person fearmongering like the assertion that Shoebat witnessed "how we Muslims were again able to gain a foothold by crossing through your fortification with a Trojan Horse we called 'peace' in an attempt to change your very foundations and constitution" (27). Shoebat's personal narrative of a violent past has raised doubts (Luyken) but nowhere near those warranted by fellow

⁷ Her father was Colonel Mustafa Hafez, head of Egyptian army intelligence in the Gaza Strip in the early 1950s, who was killed by an Israeli letter bomb in July 1956. Jim Holstun, however, questions some of Darwish's claims regarding her father.

Christian Zionist Ergun Caner's self-portrayal as an erstwhile jihadist. Caner's *Unveiling Islam: An Insider's Look at Muslim Life and Beliefs* sold almost 200,000 copies and became "an authoritative reference for many conservative preachers" (Lean: 86). Eventually, though, Caner's credibility came crashing down.⁸ Not only did bloggers uncover major discrepancies in details about his Muslim past, but native speakers pointed out that Caner's supposedly Arabic phrases in speeches were in fact gibberish.

Just as the CFSP has recycled the charge that a discovered document reveals a conspiracy to destroy America, ex-Muslim insiders inhabit a well-traveled demonizing orbit spinning throughout American history. In his 1964 essay "The Paranoid Style in American Politics," Richard Hofstadter declared that a

special significance attaches to the figure of the renegade from the enemy cause. The anti-Masonic movement seemed at times to be the creation of ex-Masons; it certainly attached the highest significance and gave the most unqualified credulity to their revelations. Anti-Catholicism used the runaway nun and the apostate priest, anti-Mormonism the ex-wife from the harem of polygamy; the avant-garde anti-Communist movements of our time use the ex-Communist.

Many of these ex-insiders made false accusations against the group or religion they had left. The published memoirs of ex-priest Charles Chiniquy devoted a chapter to explaining how the Catholic hierarchy secretly arranged the assassination of Abraham Lincoln. Far more consequential for fueling Protestant fury, the 1836 *Awful Disclosures of the Hotel Dieu Nunnery in Montreal* presented revelations of a nun who escaped a hellish convent, in which lecherous priests executed nuns who refused their sexual advances and killed babies born to nuns they impregnated. Although an investigation determined the baseless nature of these claims, it was impotent in stemming the ensuing outcry that contributed to raids and burnings of convents and to mob attacks on Catholic churches. Two decades after *Awful Disclosures* titillated readers, the best-selling *Female Life Among the Mormons* followed suit, purporting to provide salacious insight into the life of a woman hypnotized into marrying a Mormon elder. Additionally, excommunicated Mormon John C. Bennett wrote about a "secret lodge of women" (Walker: 62) kept by church leaders for their sexual pleasure. These ex-insider stories stirred up fear that Mormon men sought to forcibly add non-Mormon women to their harems. Moving to the twentieth century, dubious ex-insider allegation reared its head again during the Second Red Scare of the 1940s and 1950s. Former Communists were called upon to identify Communist Party members and discuss the party's internal operations,⁹ but some ex-Communists offered false testimony. Former *Daily Worker* editor Louis Budenz, for instance, became a star witness who was "willing to tailor his testimony to the government's needs" (Schrecker: 197). Without the mendacity of Budenz and other ex-Communists, the runaway train of McCarthyism would likely have not run over so many American lives.

⁸ Caner was removed from his post as head of Liberty University's seminary in 2010. Remarkably, however, he went on to receive appointments as vice president at Arlington Baptist Theological Seminary and then as president of Brewton-Parker College, a Southern Baptist institution in Georgia.

⁹ According to the chief counsel of the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee, "When civilization is in mortal danger, the ex-Communist is one of the most valuable members of society" (Schrecker: 76).

Frozen Past Time

Zooming in now on the CFSP's and Darwish's construction of frozen past time, I begin with a sampling of comments that explicitly connect shariah with Islam's seventh-century origins. The CFSP declares, "In fact, the forces of shariah have been at war with non-Muslims for 1400 years and with the United States of America for 200 years. While the most recent campaign to impose this totalitarian code began in the late 20th Century, it is but the latest in a historical record of offensive warfare that stretches back to the origins of Islam itself" (23). Darwish also maintains that shariah has deterministically shaped Muslim lives since the seventh century. According to Darwish, "Some fourteen hundred years later, the laws that codified the brutal seventh-century desert tribal way of life still rule over 1.2 billion people around the globe. ... Muslims have no choice but to live as captives within the confines of a psychological 'iron curtain' of Sharia from which they cannot escape. They are living under the most brutal, degrading, and humiliating laws in human history" (2009, 23). Like the CFSP, Darwish asserts that shariah's unwavering rootedness in a dark seventh-century Arabian past has devastating effects not only for Muslims but for non-Muslims as well. She contends that Islam's ultimate goal "is to establish Sharia law over the entire world," thereby instituting "laws of medieval cruelty that take away the dignity of the human spirit and suck dry the very soul of freedom" (2009, xix). Darwish goes on to state, "From its inception and its founding principles, Islam was terrified and threatened by the mere existence of Judaism and Christianity in and around the Arabian Peninsula, and it is still chasing them out of existence" (2009, xxvi–xxvii). As Darwish presents it, Muslims today must absolutely obey an ossified shariah by continuing to chase Judaism and Christianity into oblivion.

Darwish and the CFSP insist that Muslims have no choice but to heed such demands, because shariah was monolithically set in stone at the time of Islam's origins, leaving no room for interpretation or variation. The CFSP proclaims, "Of late, representatives of Muslim- and Arab-American groups and their apologists have been claiming that there is no single shariah, that it is subject to interpretation and no one interpretation is any more legitimate than any other. In fact, for especially the Sunni and with regard to non-Muslims, there is ultimately but one shariah. It is totalitarian in character" (14). The CFSP report delineates this "totalitarian character" under the heading "Key Tenets of Shariah," which includes female genital mutilation, honor killing, hatred of Jews, and Islamic supremacism among its long list of tenets. Comments about each tenet lack any suggestion of possible variety in interpretation. Furthermore, Qur'an verses and statements from the Prophet Muhammad serve to cement each monolithic tenet within Islam's time of origin. Admittedly, comments about some of these tenets accurately describe shariah as it is presently implemented in areas controlled by Wahhabi Islam. Regarding adultery, for example, the CFSP says that "unlawful intercourse is a capital crime under shariah, punishable by lashing and stoning to death" (41), and comments about apostasy include the following: "The established ruling of shariah is that apostates are to be killed wherever they may be found" (42). The CFSP never acknowledges, however, that a large percentage of Muslims do not share these views concerning adultery, apostasy, and many other "key tenets" as described in its report.

Painting a picture of absolute uniformity, the CFSP feeds readers a steady diet of essentializing *to be* verbs in its shariah tenet descriptions. The verbs *is* and *are* convey an invariable continuity of shariah throughout Islamic history, further locking Muslims within frozen past time. Darwish shows similar fondness for using essentializing *to be* verbs when describing Muslims and shariah. She asserts, “To be a Muslim is to take an oath of submission to the Sharia state, and that oath prevents you from claiming the human rights that are the priority of any true religion. That is why Islam’s greatest enemies are Christianity and Judaism and nations that are founded on their values” (2009, xx). This assertion exhibits Darwish’s predilection to cast Muslims as dehumanized automatons who must mindlessly obey a static shariah. Displaying this predilection elsewhere, Darwish states, “Because Sharia allows no choices, people accept their destiny without trying to change it, giving in to fatalism. The expression ‘*In Shaa Allah*,’ meaning ‘if Allah wills,’ is the most commonly used expression by Muslims. Other commonly used expressions that reflect the societal fatalism: ‘*Maktoub*’ – ‘everything is written,’ and ‘*Elquesma*’ – ‘this is my destiny or my share in life.’ Society becomes fatalistic, static, stagnant, and rigid” (2009: 170–171). Darwish claims to substantiate this inevitable fatalism based on what she personally experienced in Egypt. She alleges to have been instructed that there “is only one direction that a Muslim’s thought process is allowed to venture: *I am right, and you are wrong; I am superior, and you are inferior; Islam and the Arab culture is the only way, and yours is evil and I must do everything I can to change you*” (2009: 171–72). As if these statements had not sufficiently portrayed Muslims as fearsome automatons, later in *Cruel and Usual Punishment*, Darwish avows that Muslims “are incapable of feeling compassion toward non-Muslims. Acknowledging compassion to non-Muslim oppressed minorities is grounds for apostasy. A Muslim must stay hardened and unyielding” (215). Rather than a fellow human being, Darwish’s Muslim is a “sharia-slave” (2009: xx), a monstrous other who must remain as hardened as fourteen-century-old ossified shariah.

Albeit without Darwish’s supposed ex-insider evidence, the CFSP is no less adamant in asserting that a static shariah requires unquestioning adherence to “an aggressive military doctrine ... and a ruthless enforcement mechanism” (30). Like Darwish, the CFSP argues that Muslims’ mindless obedience to shariah includes absolute commitment to promoting Islamic worldwide dominance. The CFSP refers to “the obligation shariah demands of its followers – namely, to conduct a global campaign to replace non-Muslim governments with Islamic States governed by Islamic law” (30). In one of its many sentences that begin with “Indeed” or “In fact,” the CFSP report proclaims, “Indeed, shariah is an aggressively territorial system that holds all land on earth has been given by Allah to Muslims in perpetuity: Since the world already belongs in its entirety to Muslims – whether currently in reality or prospectively – they are both destined and obligated to dominate it” (91). This reference to “perpetuity” again reflects frozen past time and places Muslims within this temporal framework. Additionally, though, this statement insinuates that frozen past time shapes not only Muslims’ lives; it looms as a monumental threat to non-Muslim Americans. Because frozen past time allegedly requires Muslims to obey the shariah demand to gain Islamic supremacy in America, it also purportedly places non-Muslims within ominous future time. American failure to recognize this clash of temporalities and respond accordingly, according to the CFSP and Darwish, will result in catastrophe.

Ominous Future Time

In one of her most striking metaphors, Darwish declares that Islam and shariah “are inseparable for survival. If Islam is a policeman, Sharia is his gun” (2009: 23). Both Darwish and the CFSP portray America as standing directly within shariah’s crosshairs. They assert, moreover, that shariah’s infiltration into America is already far advanced, and so Americans must immediately recalibrate their perspective regarding Muslims in their midst. Like others in the shariah scare industry, the CFSP and Darwish assign themselves prophet-like roles, warning Americans either to respond swiftly to shariah’s infiltration or to face impending doom. In addition to alleging that nearly every Muslim American organization serves as a Muslim Brotherhood front secretly expediting the spread of shariah, the CFSP declares, “The insinuation of shariah and its adherents into America’s academic, banking and finance, government, intelligence, law enforcement and military institutions and society more generally is quite far advanced” (84). The CFSP report provides ostensible evidence detailing shariah’s clandestine progress within these various segments of American society. In regard to academic institutions, for instance, it asserts, “The Department of Education and school boards across America have been penetrated for the purpose of encouraging, subliminally at first, submission to shariah in textbooks and pedagogy. The object is to control and soften the history of Islam and how it is taught to American students” (166). Capitalizing on readers’ concerns about the vulnerability of young Americans, the CFSP suggests that shariah has moved from lurking outside school doors to taking a seat in the classroom.

Whether in schools or in other segments of American society, shariah supposedly has a henchman in the doctrine of taqiyya. According to the CFSP and Darwish, this shariah tenet has greatly facilitated the infiltration of shariah throughout America. As Yarden Mariuma explains, taqiyya is “the idea that, under certain circumstances—mainly imminent threat of death, or other forms of serious, irrevocable harm—lying is permissible and even laudable for the purpose of preserving one’s life and ability to continue to fight spiritually for the faith” (89). Islamic jurists and theologians have deemed taqiyya acceptable amidst particular conditions in the past, such as Shia self-protection from a Sunni majority.¹⁰ The CFSP and Darwish, however, repeat a common refrain in American Islamophobic discourse by presenting taqiyya as a binding principle for Muslims in the present. Accusations of taqiyya arose in 2010 in response to Muslim assurance that a proposed Islamic community center near the Ground Zero site in Manhattan was intended to enhance the local community and promote interfaith harmony. Opponents dismissed this assurance as a ruse to conceal an actual purpose of fostering Islamic violence. Cries of taqiyya emerged again the following year in a campaign against the reality show *All-American Muslim*. According to the Florida Family Association, the show’s portrayal of Michigan Muslims as peaceful citizens attempted “to manipulate Americans into ignoring the threat of jihad” (Sorkin). This trepidation-invoking trope of individuals lying about or otherwise hiding their true anti-American intentions is old hat in America, making frequent rounds in literature and on the

¹⁰ Mariuma states, “Near the beginning of the Shiite/Sunni divide in Islam, Shiite jurists and theologians, searching for a method to protect the Shiite community from constant persecution from the (ruling) Sunni majority, increased the scope and importance of a pre-existing concept in Sunni law: that of Taqiyya” (89).

silver screen.¹¹ Fear of wartime disloyalty from immigrants hailing from enemy nations has occasionally fueled this trope's fire. Among an array of suspicions of what truly lay beneath the surface of an outwardly loyal German American citizenry during World War I, German American Red Cross volunteers faced accusations of putting shards of glass in food shipped to soldiers, and German American parochial schools were "rumored to be hotbeds of subversion" (Walker: 42). Suspicion of false outward appearances had especially devastating consequences during World War II, when allegations of espionage and proposed sabotage contributed to the internment of nearly 120,000 Japanese Americans despite their profession of American allegiance.

Like the devices of discovered conspiratorial documents and ex-insider testimony, the recycling of the false outward appearance allegation is another means whereby "Muslim Americans today are cast as the latest villains in the grand nativist epic about the downfall of the United States" (Bayoumi: 137). The CFSP and Darwish perpetrate this recycling and bolster their construction of ominous future time with numerous assertions that the shariah tenet of *taqiyya* requires Muslims to lie and hide their nefarious intentions behind a peaceful veneer. The CFSP declares, "Shariah demands, moreover, that its adherents lie where it will be advantageous in dealings with infidels whose submission is an obligation" (97). Similarly, Darwish states, "According to Islamic Sharia, I am obligated to lie if the goal is obligatory, and Muslim expansion is obligatory" (2009: 159). Darwish eagerly grounds Muslims' allegedly unwavering commitment to *taqiyya* not only in shariah but also in the very fabric of "Arab and Muslim culture" (2009: 158). Maintaining that she "learned this from personal experience" (2009: 158), Darwish extrapolates:

The politically correct crowd in the West must understand that Sharia laws themselves demand that Muslim lie to them. Although difficult for a Western culture to comprehend, dishonesty is encouraged in children from early on. In 2007, I was watching a children's show on Arab TV where a Muslim preacher was speaking to children, all boys around age ten. He told them that lying is not allowed in Islam except to non-Muslims and Jews and in times of war, or when you lie to settle a problem between two Muslim groups or people, or lie to your wife for the sake of not creating problems. Imagine that! That is being told to Muslim children today. (2009: 159)

Darwish insists that "Muslims living in the West are playing a con game with Americans" (2012: 133), utilizing the *taqiyya* tactic of placating non-Muslims with a peaceful message but saying the opposite amidst Muslim-only audiences. The CFSP echoes this claim of Muslim American *taqiyya* two-facedness. At one point applying the label "world-class *taqiyya*" (156) to a Huffington Post interview featuring Muslim Public Affairs Council

¹¹ Martha Nussbaum writes, "Most good horror stories involve a clear adversary who lies low, only to reveal his true nature when it is too late for the innocent victim to seek safety. ... [F]ear thrives on the idea of hiddenness, of danger lurking beneath the façade of normalcy" (23–24). Nussbaum's point pertains especially well to Second Red Scare America, when Communists were feared to endanger "American society in much the same ways as the mutants and space invaders of the contemporaneous science fiction films threatened the planet. Like party members, the aliens of the sci-fi films of the fifties often hid their powers behind a mild, even benevolent, exterior" (Schrecker: 135).

president Salam al-Marayati, the CFSP report professes, “In short, what Muslim audiences are required to know about Islam is not the same thing as what non-Muslim Western audiences are allowed to know – or encouraged to think – by Islamic authorities. *Taqiyya* provides the legal basis under shariah for this sort of deceptive dual messaging” (102). The CFSP calls for vigilance in response, warning that “it is imperative that those whose duty it is to protect the United States from shariah grasp the centrality of *taqiyya* in the arsenal of its adherents. This is critical because the consequences of *taqiyya* extend to real world issues related, for example, to Muslim overtures of interfaith dialogue, peace and mutual tolerance” (102). The CFSP and Darwish express grave concern that *taqiyya* has hoodwinked far too many Americans, perilously preventing them from recognizing their present existence within ominous future time.

Such failure to read the signs of the times, according to the CFSP and Darwish, guarantees the further success of “stealth jihad” in America. This phrase was popularized by Robert Spencer, who claimed in 2008 that “stealth jihadists have already made significant inroads into American life. ... And, every day, they are advancing their agenda. ... The stealth jihadists are working energetically to wear away the very fabric of American culture. It is happening right now, under our noses” (7). The CFSP strongly concurs with Spencer’s assessment and ramps up the threat level even higher by using the phrases “stealth jihad” and “pre-violent jihad” as synonyms. The CFSP proclaims, “Absent an appreciation of the threat posed by stealth jihad, the pre-violent jihadist is free to proceed unimpeded under the radar in Western societies” (84). This unhindered infiltration will allegedly result in dire consequences, with the subversion of American laws and social norms constituting the first stage before the devastating violence to follow. According to the CFSP, “It must always be kept in mind, of course, that stealthy jihad tactics are just that: tactics to prepare the U.S. battlefield for the inevitable violence to come” (10). The CFSP maintains that Muslim Americans frequently wrap their stealth, or pre-violent, jihad tactics in beautiful packaging called *dawah*, which unwitting non-Muslims believe refers to a peaceful invitation to learn about Islam.¹² Darwish also identifies *dawah* as a vital component of jihad’s stealthy initial phase that facilitates the onset of its violent second phase. She declares that “when Muslims say *dawa*, the West should be warned, because what they do not want you to know is that *dawa* is merely the ‘make nice’ first step preceding outright jihad, according to Sharia” (2009: 183). *Taqiyya* does its purportedly characteristic dirty work by tricking non-Muslims regarding the true intention of *dawah*, as well as regarding the true meaning of jihad. Seeking to discredit the mainstream Islamic emphasis on jihad as a peaceful spiritual struggle, the CFSP professes, “There is no basis in doctrinal Islam for concluding that jihad means anything other than waging holy war. ... Allah commanded it and Mohammed confirmed it. In both direct and indirect divine revelation, the meaning of jihad as holy war was made clear” (80). Darwish uses her ex-insider position to fire additional ammunition against a peaceful conception of jihad. She contends, “This ‘inner struggle’ business is hogwash. In the Arab world there is only one meaning for jihad, and that is: a religious holy war against

¹² The CFSP states, “*Dawa*, the call to Islam that by Islamic law must precede jihad, is all-too-often dismissed – as are its manifestations under the rubric of non-violent jihad – simply because this kind of assault does not kill but intends ‘merely’ to subjugate” (83).

infidels. It is a fight for Allah's cause. ... I have never heard of any discussion of inner struggle in my thirty years living in the Middle East. Such nonsense is a PR ploy for Western consumption only" (2006: 201). This "PR ploy" supposedly seeks to leave Americans ungaurded from a two-stage shariah-mandated assault. Exhorting Americans to protect themselves immediately, Darwish and the CFSP insist that while shariah would be scary enough due to the havoc it wreaks on American laws and norms, its promise of ensuing violence makes ominous future time even more ominous for Americans and their nation.

Darwish details this two-stage offensive in perhaps her darkest ominous future time scenario, found in the introduction to *Cruel and Usual Punishment*. Her American apocalyptic narrative proceeds as follows:

As Islamists gain more political power with the increase in the Muslim population, demands for Sharia will no longer be restricted to laws pertaining to marriage and inheritance, but will include Sharia-mandated corporal punishment and executions, not only for crimes against society but for sins against Allah. If this is not given to them, vigilante street violence against citizens who do not abide by Sharia will produce an outward compliance with Sharia through fear. ... When finally a country becomes an independent majority Muslim State, Sharia law will be the law of the land over Muslims as well as non-Muslim minorities. All institutions of society will be geared toward promoting Islam and eradicating any other form of religion. Minorities will find life impossible to live unless they convert or leave the homeland of their ancestors. But will the bloodshed in the Islamic state end here? I believe not; the violence and bloodshed inside Islamic states is never ending, even if the Muslim State is 100 percent Muslim. (xxv–xxvi)

In comparison to Darwish, CFSP rhetoric may not be as extreme, but it presents shariah's promise of danger to America as no less real. The CFSP asserts that "it is clear that conformance to shariah in America constitutes as great a threat as any enemy the nation has ever confronted" (20). Because of this threat's supposed magnitude and success in infiltrating America so far, the CFSP and Darwish demand that Americans act now before it is too late. According to Darwish, "Western democracies are underestimating a major threat that will push their futures to a point of no return. The West must either wake up to the danger today or submit unconditionally tomorrow" (2009: xiii). Viewing themselves as stirring Americans from deadly slumber, the CFSP and Darwish urge Americans to make the right choice today in response to shariah, namely the choice to do whatever lies in their power to stop its spread immediately. Unlike their depiction of Muslims deterministically locked into frozen past time, the CFSP and Darwish suggest that non-Muslims possess freedom of choice. From the shariah scare industry perspective, however, in dealing with Islam ominous future time allows only one viable option: taking swift and significant action to eradicate shariah's presence in America.

Conclusion

The CFSP expounds on this call to action by charting a two-step course, involving knowing the "true nature" of the shariah threat and then taking proportionate measures (33). The CFSP proclaims,

U.S. policymakers, financiers, businessmen, judges, journalists, community leaders and the public at large must be equipped with an accurate understanding of the nature of shariah and the necessity of keeping American shariah-free. At a minimum, this will entail resisting – rather than acquiescing to – the concerted efforts now being made to allow that alien legal code to become established in this country as an alternate, parallel system to the Constitution and the laws enacted pursuant to it. (33)

From this standpoint, March Against Shariah demonstrations and anti-shariah legislation are necessary actions, albeit “at a minimum.” The CFSP’s reference to “a minimum” should raise the following question: If demonstrating against shariah and passing anti-shariah measures constitute a minimum response, what might going beyond the minimum entail? As the CFSP demands “a determined and vigorous program to keep America shariah-free” (12), what might this program include? Foreshadowing Donald Trump’s Muslim travel ban proposal, the CFSP suggests one possible answer by avowing, “Immigration of those who adhere to shariah must be precluded, as was previously done with adherents to the seditious ideology of communism” (35). Darwish also proposes actions that echo in Trump campaign rhetoric, including his comments about a potential Muslim registry and the possible forced closure of some American mosques.¹³ Darwish claims that shortly after arriving in the United States, she “discovered that rabid anti-American feeling is rampant in the majority of U.S. mosques” (2006: 140). For readers persuaded by Darwish’s ex-insider allegations, vigorous mosque surveillance or even permanent shutdown of mosques becomes an American imperative.

Believing that they and their nation face an imminent possibility of irreparable devastation, Americans who heed the shariah scare alarm may find moral justification in Muslim travel bans, mosque closures, or any other measures regardless of their effects on Muslim lives. As J. Robert Cox explains, “Because the irreparable lasts ‘an infinity of time,’ actors may feel justified in going to extreme lengths to block or forestall the loss of something rare, precious, or unique. ... [T]he *locus* of the irreparable may be said to warrant ‘extraordinary’ measures – actions which go beyond the usual, customary, or what most people would approve” (227). An appetite for extraordinary measures against Muslims is a likely consequence of shariah scare industry arguments that it is Americans’ ominous future time duty to save themselves and fellow human beings from dehumanized “shariah slaves” entrenched within frozen past time. Displaying her love of hyperbole, Darwish asserts, “Western civilization has no idea that it is entrusted with the enormous responsibility of saving humanity. ... The West must never be tolerant of an intolerant ideology that seeks to destroy it. Western countries must trust and use their basic ‘survival instincts’ to neutralize an enemy made up of jihadist killer robots” (2012: 222). Worlds apart from acknowledging Muslim Americans as compatriots or fellow human beings, Darwish’s shariah scare industry portrayal transforms Muslims into anti-American automatons.

Shariah scare industry members seem to realize the presence of a formidable source of vulnerability in their quest to persuade Americans to view Muslims in this type of threatening, dehumanized manner. These demonizing Muslim caricatures would likely

¹³ See Abramson and Basu concerning Trump’s comments about a Muslim registry and closing mosques.

implode as non-Muslim Americans personally interact with Muslims. Seeking to insulate their construction of shariah threat from this implosion, the shariah scare industry once again cries taqiyya, alleging that Muslim peacefulness and kindness that non-Muslims observe firsthand actually demonstrate another manifestation of shariah-mandated deception. Thus non-Muslim interaction with Muslim Americans would supposedly be unwise; moreover, the CFSP suggests, it would be unnecessary. The CFSP proclaims that its report makes “plain it *is* possible to know the enemy and his intentions with certitude” (84). From this point of view, Muslims must be observed and analyzed at a distance, and if informed by the CFSP report or likeminded sources, no need exists for openness to Muslims themselves.

Such closure to Muslims should elicit pessimism in terms of the likelihood that anti-shariah sentiments will diminish as Americans move deeper into the twenty-first century. Fortunately, however, optimism may prevail thanks to the various settings in which non-Muslim Americans personally interact with Muslim Americans. A non-Muslim may lose his fear of shariah after spending time on and off the court with Muslims in a Muslim basketball league.¹⁴ Another non-Muslim may experience the disabusing of her notions about shariah after befriending a Muslim she met at a mosque interfaith gathering. Unlike a present shaped by an ominous future or a frozen past, these personal interactions may offer both non-Muslim and Muslim Americans a present rich with disclosure, in which shared humanity and other striking personal similarities amidst religious difference are revealed. Despite the efforts of the shariah scare industry, these rich present moments may continue to lead the way towards a deeply interconnected, mutually rewarding future for Muslims and their fellow Americans.

¹⁴ See Fink for more information about Muslim basketball leagues.

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